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SIPDIS

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FROM U.S. MISSION TO UN AGENCIES IN ROME

STATE FOR IO/EDA AND IO/S  
USDA FOR FAS/HUGHES AND REICH  
USDA FOR APHIS/GREIFER

PARIS FOR UNESCO, VIENNA FOR UNVIE

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [AORC](#) [KUNR](#) [FAO](#) [KUNRAORC](#) [FAO](#) [KUNRAORC](#) [FAO](#)  
SUBJECT: GENEVA GROUP DISCUSSES TERM LIMITS

REF: STATE 201776

1. SUMMARY: THE GENEVA GROUP DISCUSSED TERM LIMITS ON OCTOBER 16. GERMANY HAS REQUESTED THAT THE ISSUE BE INCLUDED IN THE AGENDA OF THE FAO COUNCIL WHICH MEETS OCTOBER 28 TO NOVEMBER 2. ACCORDING TO THE GROUNDWORK DONE BY DENMARK AS PRESIDENT OF THE EU, THERE IS CONSIDERABLE OPPOSITION TO THIS INITIATIVE, ESPECIALLY FROM AFRICANS WHO SEE IT AS AN EFFORT TO UNSEAT THE CURRENT AFRICAN DG. MEMBERS APPLAUDED THE US DEMARCHE AIMED AT SOFTENING RESISTANCE TO INCLUDING TERM LIMITS ON THE AGENDA AND SOME OFFERED TO MAKE SIMILAR DEMARCHES TO CAPITALS OF COUNCIL MEMBER COUNTRIES. THE MOST DESIRABLE OUTCOME OF DISCUSSION IN THE FAO COUNCIL WOULD BE FORMATION OF AN OPEN ENDED WORKING GROUP TO DISCUSS ISSUES RELATED TO TERM LIMITS: HOW MANY TERMS, WHEN LIMITS WOULD TAKE EFFECT, AND SHORTENING THE LENGTH OF TERMS. END SUMMARY.

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2. THE GENEVA GROUP MET OCTOBER 16 TO DISCUSS TERM LIMITS AS WELL AS ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES THAT WILL COME UP AT THE FAO COUNCIL MEETING OCTOBER 28 TO NOVEMBER 2. THE EU REPRESENTATIVE (DENMARK'S PERM REP) REPORTED ON MEETINGS WITH ALL REGIONAL GROUPS IN FAO CONCERNING THE PROPOSAL TO PLACE TERM LIMITS FOR THE DIRECTOR GENERAL ON THE COUNCIL AGENDA. THIS IS NECESSARY TO LAUNCH DISCUSSION IN TIME FOR A DECISION BY THE FAO CONFERENCE IN 2003. THE OECD GROUP, INCLUDING EUROPE, NORTH AMERICA (US AND CANADA) THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC (MAINLY AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND) AND FROM ASIA, KOREA AND JAPAN, WERE IN FAVOR. THE LATIN AMERICA GROUP IS "OPEN TO DISCUSSION" OF THE MATTER. (COMMENT: WE HAVE POINTED OUT TO THEM THAT IF THE PRINCIPLE OF GEOGRAPHIC ROTATION IS MAINTAINED, LATIN AMERICA WOULD BE IN LINE TO SELECT THE NEXT DIRECTOR GENERAL. END COMMENT.) MOST OF THE ASIAN

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ACTION IO-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AF-00	AGRE-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00
	INL-00	WHA-00	EAP-00	EB-00	EUR-00	UTED-00	TEDE-00
	INR-00	NEA-00	NSAE-00	OES-01	OIC-02	SS-00	TEST-00
	SA-00	SAS-00	/003W				

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R 220700Z OCT 02  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6461  
INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA  
AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU  
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE  
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE  
AMEMBASSY ACCRA  
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
AMEMBASSY MASERU

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AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR  
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT  
AMEMBASSY MEXICO  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
AMEMBASSY LIMA  
AMEMBASSY MANILA  
AMEMBASSY DOHA  
AMEMBASSY RIYADH  
AMEMBASSY DAKAR  
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM  
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMEMBASSY TUNIS  
AMEMBASSY HARARE  
USEU BRUSSELS 2865  
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
AMEMBASSY LISBON  
AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK  
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA  
USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
USMISSION GENEVA  
AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
USINT HAVANA

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SUBJECT: GENEVA GROUP DISCUSSES TERM LIMITS

REGIONAL GROUP (80 PERCENT), AND THE MIDDLE EASTERN GROUP  
FAVOR DISCUSSION OF TERM LIMITS. HOWEVER THE AFRICA  
GROUP IS DIVIDED.

13. THE AFRICANS ARE CONCERNED THAT THIS REFORM  
INITIATIVE IS AIMED AT UNSEATING THE CURRENT DG, JACQUES  
DIOUF OF SENEGAL. THEY MAY ALSO FEAR THAT A NEW DIRECTOR  
GENERAL WOULD NOT CONTINUE TO SKEW THE PROGRAM EMPHASIS  
OF FAO IN FAVOR OF AFRICA. (THIS BIAS IS NOT WITHOUT  
MERIT SINCE AFRICA NEEDS THE MOST HELP, BUT THERE ARE  
MANY POOR FARMERS IN RURAL AREAS ESPECIALLY OF OTHER  
REGIONS WHO RECEIVE VERY LITTLE ASSISTANCE.) UGANDA,  
SUPPORTED BY MAURITANIA, NIGERIA AND ERITREA THOUGHT THAT  
TERM LIMITS WOULD BE POSITIVE FOR INSTITUTIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT. MALI WAS THE MOST VOCAL OPPONENT. HE SAID  
THE ISSUE WOULD TAKE THE COUNCIL'S TIME AND ATTENTION  
AWAY FROM MORE IMPORTANT ISSUES LIKE FOLLOW-UP TO THE  
WORLD FOOD SUMMIT: FIVE YEARS LATER AND THE MEDIUM TERM  
PLAN. ZIMBABWE SAID THE AFRICAN GROUP DID NOT WANT TO

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"ABANDON" THE DG. SHE ASKED FOR A WRITTEN EXPLANATION OF  
THE REASONS FOR ABOLISHING TERM LIMITS IN 1977 (WE  
UNDERSTAND THAT THEN DG SAOURMA WANTED TO SERVE NOT TWO,  
BUT THREE TERMS FOR A TOTAL OF 18 YEARS SO HE ENGINEERED  
A CHANGE IN THE BASIC TEXTS OF THE FAO) AS WELL AS A  
REPLY TO THE QUESTION, "WHY NOW?" MANY IN THE AFRICA  
GROUP THOUGHT IT PREMATURE TO DISCUSS THE MATTER SINCE IT  
WOULD NOT COME UP UNTIL 2011 WHEN THE DG'S THIRD TERM, IF  
HE CHOOSES TO SERVE AND IS ELECTED, WOULD EXPIRE. THE EU  
IS PREPARING A REPLY.

14. MEMBERS OF THE GENEVA GROUP WERE INDIGNANT THAT THE  
FAO MEMBERSHIP MIGHT NOT EVEN PERMIT DISCUSSION OF TERM  
LIMITS, WHICH IS ALL THAT IS AT STAKE AT PRESENT, AND  
MIGHT VOTE AGAINST INCLUSION IN THE COUNCIL'S AGENDA.  
THE US DEMARCHE TO CAPITALS OF COUNTRIES WHICH ARE

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ACTION IO-00

INFO LOG-00 NP-00 AF-00 AGRE-00 AID-00 AMAD-00 CIAE-00

INL-00 WHA-00 EAP-00 EB-00 EUR-00 UTED-00 TEDE-00  
INR-00 NEA-00 NSAE-00 OES-01 OIC-02 SS-00 TEST-00  
SA-00 SAS-00 /003W

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MEMBERS OF THE FAO COUNCIL, WAS RECEIVED FAVORABLY. CANADA AND AUSTRALIA ANNOUNCED THEY WOULD REQUEST THEIR OWN CAPITALS TO MAKE SIMILAR DEMARCHES. THE EU HAS ALREADY PROVIDED BACKGROUND MATERIAL TO RELEVANT CAPITALS BUT PROMISED TO CONSIDER A MORE ACTIVE STANCE. FRANCE, WHICH WAS LESS THAN ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE INITIATIVE IN LIGHT OF FRANCE'S SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH WEST AFRICA AND ESPECIALLY SENEGAL, GRUMBLED THAT THE ISSUE WAS TOO COMPLEX TO DECIDE QUICKLY. HE POINTED OUT THAT BEYOND ISSUES OF WHEN TERM LIMITS WOULD TAKE EFFECT (AND WHETHER THE CURRENT DG WOULD BE GRANDFATHERED) THERE WERE ISSUES OF THE NUMBER OF TERMS (WE PROPOSED TWO) AND THE LENGTH OF TERMS (NOW SIX INSTEAD OF THE RECOMMENDED FOUR YEARS). THERE WAS SOME DISCUSSION OF WHAT TO DO IF A VOTE WERE CALLED? CAUCUS? OR WALK OUT IN PROTEST IF WE LOSE AS WE DID IN 1999? THE GROUP DECIDED TO RECOMMEND FORMATION OF AN OPEN ENDED WORKING GROUP TO LOOK AT THE VARIOUS ISSUES RAISED BY FRANCE. THAT WOULD BE THE BEST OUTCOME TO AVOID CONFRONTATION WITH THE G-77 AND KEEP THE ISSUE

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OF TERM LIMITS ALIVE.  
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